

Amendment to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-6 (cancelled).

Claim 7 (Currently amended): A method for producing a stent comprising:

providing a preliminary stent comprising a permanent portion and a detachable portion, the detachable portion comprising a first detachable portion and a second detachable portion;

contacting an end of the detachable portion with at least one retainer;

retaining the preliminary stent with the at least one retainer solely at the end of the detachable portion;

applying a coating to an outer surface of the preliminary stent;

pooling a portion of the coating adjacent a contact point where the detachable portion contacts the retainer; and

detaching the detachable portion with a pooled coating from the permanent portion.

Claim 8 (previously presented): The method of claim 7 further comprising polishing the end of the permanent portion which was detached from the detachable portion.

Claim 9 (original): The method of claim 7 further comprising drying the coating.

Claim 10 (original): The method of claim 7 wherein detaching the detachable portion from the permanent portion further comprises detaching the detachable portion from the permanent portion by laser cutting.

Claim 11 (original): The method of claim 7 wherein detaching the detachable portion from the permanent portion further comprises detaching the detachable portion from the permanent portion by mechanical cutting.

Claim 12 (original): The method of claim 7 wherein applying a coating to the preliminary stent further comprises spraying a coating on the preliminary stent.

Claim 13 (original): The method of claim 7 wherein applying a coating to the preliminary stent further comprises dipping the preliminary stent to form a coating.

Claim 14 (previously presented): The method of claim 7 wherein the retaining the preliminary stent by the detachable portion further comprises retaining the preliminary stent by the first detachable portion and the second detachable portion.

Claim 15 (original): The method of claim 7 wherein the coating includes a therapeutic agent.

Claim 16 (original): The method of claim 7 wherein the coating is a polymer.

Claim 17 (Currently amended): A system for producing a stent comprising:

means for providing a preliminary stent comprising a permanent portion and a detachable portion;

means for retaining the preliminary stent solely by an end of the detachable portion;

means for applying a coating to an outer surface of the preliminary stent;
and

means for detaching the detachable portion with a pooled coating from the permanent portion.

Claim 18 (previously presented): The system of claim 17 further comprising means for polishing the end of the permanent portion which was detached from the detachable portion.

Claim 19 (original): The system of claim 17 further comprising means for drying the coating.

Claim 20 (original): The system of claim 17 wherein the detachable portion further comprises a first detachable portion and a second detachable portion; and means for retaining the preliminary stent by the detachable portion further comprises means for retaining the preliminary stent by the first detachable portion and the second detachable portion.

Claim 21 and Claim 22 (cancelled):

Claim 23 (Currently amended): A stent coating system comprising:
a preliminary stent comprising a first detachable portion, a second detachable portion and a permanent portion disposed between the first and second detachable portions; and
a retainer, the retainer comprising a first retaining portion and a second retaining portion, the preliminary stent disposed between the first retaining portion and the second retaining portion,
wherein the first detachable portion includes a first end for contacting the first retaining portion and the second detachable portion includes a second end for contacting the second retaining portion, and wherein the retainer contacts the preliminary stent solely at the first end and second end.

Claim 24 (Currently amended): A preliminary stent coating system comprising:
at least one retainer;

a preliminary stent comprising a first detachable portion, a second detachable portion and a permanent portion disposed between the first and second detachable portions, wherein at least one of the first detachable portion and the second detachable portion includes at least one contact point contacting the at least one retainer;

a coating disposed on an outer surface of the preliminary stent, wherein the coating comprises at least one pooled portion disposed at the at least one contact point,

wherein the at least one retainer contacts the preliminary stent solely at the detachable portion adjacent the retainer.

Claim 25 (previously presented): The system of claim 24 wherein the first detachable portion and the second detachable portion comprise at least one detachable segment having a first shape and wherein the permanent portion comprises at least one permanent segment having a second shape.

Claim 26 (previously presented): The system of claim 25 wherein the first shape is different than the second shape.

Claim 27 (previously presented): The system of claim 25 wherein the first shape is the same as the second shape.

Claim 28 (previously presented): The system of claim 24 wherein the at least one retainer is chosen from a group consisting of a conical retainer, a spring-loaded clip, and a truncated cone.

Claim 29 (previously presented): The system of claim 24 wherein the at least one retainer comprises a first conical retainer for retaining the first detachable portion and a second conical retainer for retaining the second detachable portion.

Claim 30 (previously presented): The system of claim 24 wherein the coating comprises at least one therapeutic agent.